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"WAR DREAMS" THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE
FOUNDERS GALLERY JULY 27 - SEPTEMBER 9

"War Dreams," an exhibition by USD alumnus Tim Hermsen and Assistant Professor of Art James Rocha, will show at USD's Founders Gallery from July 27 to September 9. The Gallery is open weekdays only from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Hermsen's writings and Rocha's paintings are the result of their combat experiences in Vietnam.

It took Rocha more than a decade before he could paint about his combat experiences in Vietnam.

Once he began to express his feelings about the war, he painted more than 40 pieces in two months.

Writer Timothy Hermsen, a Marine in Vietnam, is the second man featured. His writings, based on his combat experiences as an infantryman, complement Rocha's paintings.

While Rocha fought the war from a Navy destroyer off the coast of Vietnam, Hermsen found himself in the trenches. Hermsen was wounded three times in 13 months. His most serious injuries came in April 1968, when he and a fellow Marine were hit in a North Vietnamese ambush.

"Our work is very positive, not political, not condemning," said Hermsen, a 38-year-old Rancho Penasquitos resident with graduate and undergraduate degrees in psychology from USD."

More

Rocha, 37, from Encinitas, said their combined work shows that "we are finally coming to grips with our feelings about Vietnam."

"It's time to start moving on with life," Rocha said. One of his motivations for "War Dreams" was to attempt to do away with the stereotyped Vietnam veteran. "We're not Rambo."

"We're not shooting dope and robbing banks. We're just like everyone else."

Hermesen and Rocha decided to put together "War Dreams" at the urging of Therese Whitcomb, USD director of design and Founders Gallery.

Hermesen and Rocha became better acquainted with one another's work last spring when they took part in a Memorial Day art show at the Vietnam Veteran's Center in San Diego.

In contrast to Rocha, Hermesen has been producing works about Vietnam since his war days.

Rocha's first show at USD was in Founders Gallery in 1982. Presently, "West Coast Works - On and Off Paper," is showing at California State University, Humboldt.

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